THE MOUNTAIN KNOWS MY NAME

MĀUI — THE STORY THAT STARTED IT ALL (I)

Hauiti

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PUBLISHER INFORMATION

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This work is grounded in Ancestral cosmology, oral storytelling traditions, whakapapa, ancestral memory, and sacred land and ocean scapes. The narrative is presented as a work of Indigenous mythical historical fiction shaped through the traditions of oral transmission and cultural storytelling.

Published independently by:

Kaiporoporo Publications
Aotearoa, *beyond the realm of* New Zealand.
First Edition — Matariki 2026
24retoa@protonmail.com

Dedication Page

For the ancestors who carried the burden before us. And for the mokopuna yet to come.

About the Author

Kaiporoporo is the name the ancestors call me by. Hauiti is the name my father, Te Tawiri o te rangi, gave me. Hauiti is a storyteller, researcher, and writer whose work is grounded in whakapapa, ancestral landscapes, oral traditions, and Indigenous knowledge systems.

His narratives draw upon Ancestral cosmology, sacred geography, ritual memory, and intergenerational storytelling traditions to craft epic Indigenous literary worlds rooted in the living relationship between people, ancestors, and whenua.

The MĀUI trilogy serves as the ancestral prologue to the larger Nukuroa saga: it comes

Kaiporoporo Publications: *The Mountain Knows My Name*

The Birth of a Legacy

* * *

FOREWARD

Kia ora, my name is Hauiti. Come, and have a coffee with me —*my shout.* And I will share with you an epic tale that grew from our oral narratives and my profound and *raweke* imagination. I enjoyed writing this, I hope you enjoy reading it.

This story is centred on the Mountain in the middle of Te Ika ā Māui, now called Tongariro. The fishing expedition was incidental to getting them down this way to Aotearoa. The ancestors always have a plan, and most times they don't share the detail with you until you are at a certain point in the journey. This trilogy is a journey that reaches across 50 generations.

This is just the beginning.

If you enjoyed the read, shout me a coffee, and get involved in the next series of *The Mountain Knows my Name*. Link in the third volume of this series.

And it all begins with the Māui brothers.

Welcome to *The Mountain knows my name* series of books

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MĀUI —THE STORY THAT STARTED IT ALL (I)

* * *

Strap your ears on and listen

My name is Māui —Māui Tikitiki.

You may have heard of me? Probably. I mean . . . who hasn't?

I'm widely known in many islands around the Pacific Ocean, Te Moana nui ā Kiwa. Some of the s**t I did in my life time is — well, it's the stuff that legends are made of. It sounds like I'm boasting, doesn't it?

There was a time when I did a lot of that. I did grow up, but it took me awhile. I was, after all, known as a Hianga or a Raweke (don't worry, you'll get the picture – just try and keep up!) and that's what sets me apart from everyone else — Raweke . . . Hianga, Hianga . . . Raweke — kinda rolls off the tongue doesn't it.

Just think—nuisance, hell-raiser, mischief. In a class of my own.

Yeah —I know right?

You'd probably get slapped sideways by your father and mother if you did half the things I did. But when you're as slippery as me — you get away with everything — until it catches up with you. And this story, is one of those exceptions.

I have to admit though, the story that follows had me shitting in my *maro* (our version of a kilt). I thought I had bitten off more than I could chew. But — as my mokopuna says — chew faster!

Ahh . . . legends — I think I set the standard.

It makes me smile to know that I am remembered that way. More than my four brothers — all older than me. Then again, they weren't blessed with the name Tikitiki. And that, is the distinction between me and my brothers. But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself.

So —let me backtrack.

My mokopuna, (that's grandchild in our language) Hauiti, asked me to write this piece you're about to read. I said to him, 'how about I tell you the story and you write it.' I think he forgot we were storytellers, not story-writers. We used Whai — you know, manipulating a simple loop of string into patterns — to tell our stories and hold our body of knowledge.

Not sharp that boy.

Anyway, strap your ears on and listen — you're in for a treat.

Command your eyes and your heart to pay attention — you are about to hear the beginning of an epic story that spans almost 50 generations. It was life changing for me —it made me grow up really quickly.

This, is the little-known story that birthed the legacy of a famous mokopuna of mine (and not the one who wrote this story). Not as widely known as me, but a legacy worthy of the upper realms of the Heavens above. And I do mean the esoteric and divine beings that inhabit those places. You don't get a name like Tikitiki and not know that stuff. Bet you didn't know that about me.

Ah well —I didn't write your history books.

So. This mokopuna of mine is important. He was referred to as a Tohunga Tūāhu-ā-Roa, a Spiritual Authority of none other than the Creator — Io Matua.

Yeah.

Everything converged in this mokopuna — the whakapapa, (the genealogies) the Atamai (the intelligence), the Pūkenga (high level of insight and skill) and of course the fact that he was chosen and prepared from before he was born to fulfill his role in the World of Light —that's the world you inhabit now.

That tells us a lot about him doesn't it. Sit with that for a moment —and come back to it from time to time.

Proud —real proud!

Hence this story, I am about to embark on, sets the foundation for the mokopuna that becomes an acolyte or student of the other Mokopuna, the Spiritual Authority —the Tohunga Tūāhu ā roa.

Now that I remember, the old tohunga back on the home islands spoke often of a child yet to be born. Yet the way he spoke, made me wonder if that was entirely true. It was almost as though the child already belonged to the story and was merely waiting for the right moment to step into it —weird *right?*

Anyway — I'm getting ahead of myself.

Now, this story is worth re-telling.

Confused? Pay attention. But first – there was ME. That's right —ME.

Like all legends, this one had it all: An epic journey across uncharted territory, an un-inhabited land full of sentient beings, an imposing Mountain that blew its' top and yet still ruled its' domain and of course ME. Okay, *okay* — not just me —my brothers and ME. Oh —and some very special rocks —from the Mountain.

I have to admit though, what started out as a simple fishing expedition turned out to be an epic tale that is remembered around the Great Ocean of our Ancestor Kiwa — many generations later —including yours.

This —is the story that started it all.

* * *

Māui Tikitiki struck his nose until it bled blood

"Look!" shouted the excited voice pointing to the left of the bow of the waka, "over there,that cloud formation," four other heads turned, "it can only mean one thing," he cried.

All five brothers stopped what they were doing and turned, as the nose of the waka suddenly dipped, giving them all a clear view of the long white cloud.

They all shouted in unison —"Land!"

"*Ahh*" said Māui Tikitiki, "that bird, the Koekoeā, was a sign from the ancestors."

His eldest brother Māui Mua turned and nodded in his direction, "well done little brother, well done!"

Māui Tikitiki smiled inwardly to himself, pleased, knowing full well that his brothers had not wanted him on this trip.They had become so tired of his childish pranks, they decided to head out to sea for the day.

More to get away from him —than for the fishing.

The brothers had been taught from childhood never to venture onto the ocean without first offering karakia. As they prepared their waka, each brother lifted his voice in karakia to Tangaroa, Guardian of the Oceans and Master of the Tides, asking for safe passage and a plentiful catch. While they were thus occupied, Māui quietly slipped aboard and concealed himself beneath the stern of the waka.

Leaving their island village behind, the brothers paddled steadily towards their favourite fishing ground at Wakapuaka. When at last they arrived and began preparing their lines, Māui Tikitiki sprang from his hiding place.

His sudden appearance startled them all. The brothers groaned in unison at the sight of their youngest sibling. For a brief moment they considered turning back, but the journey had been long and they were already upon the fishing grounds. Reluctantly, they decided to ignore him and continue with their fishing.

Pulling out their lines, they settled down to fish.

"Brothers", he cried as he pulled out his hook, "feast your eyes upon the prized jaw bone of our illustrious ancestor Murirangawhenua!"

They all turned in his direction with raised eyebrows, clearly impressed. All the brothers knew that he needed all the help he could get. Not only was he bone lazy, but useless at gathering food and fishing. But — he had their attention.

And he knew it.

A huge smile broke across his face.

"I need some bait to grace my hook. Who is gracious enough to give me some?"

They all rolled their eyes, hoping a bird would give him some droppings.

"Brothers?"

A moment later.

"*Anei*", said Māui Taha reaching into the strands of his hair, *"Te kutu o taku ūpoko*, the lice ofmy hair", as he extended his hand in his direction. "Try this!"

They all roared with laughter.

Māui Mua stole a side glance at his youngest brother and was reminded affectionately of the nickname he had given him — Hianga, the mischief one. But he did wonder how he got his hands on the jawbone.

He waited until the jesting died down.

"So, brother, did you raid the grave of our esteemed ancestor? Such a prized possession requires special bait, one which we are unable to give you," he said.

"Perhaps," he continued, "you need to smear it with the sacred blood that runs through your veins? Only then will you satisfy the hunger it has for the great fish of the Ocean of the Ancestors!"

"Ooh," he thought, and promptly struck his nose until it bled blood over his prized hook. Mua shook his head but Māui Tikitiki ignored all of them. With a satisfied look on his face, he raised the jawbone towards the Heavens slowly. Bowed his head in reverence and intoned to Tangaroa:

Tēnā, e Koro ē

Ko te kauae nui,

Ko te kauae roa

Ko te kauae matua o Taku tipuna

a Murirangawhenua!

O, Great Father Tangaroa

Here is the Great jawbone,

The Noble jawbone

The Magnificent jawbone

Of MY ancestor

Murirangawhenua!

His brothers rolled their eyes when they heard the emphasis on HIS ancestor, Murirangawhenua. Māui Tikitiki continued with his chant:

Ko taku aro tēnei ki a koe

E Tangaroa e whakamau nei I te tai

He tai nui, he tai roa, he tai tawhito.

E Tangaroa

Tangaroa,

Tangaroa ē ī

Aro mai ki tēnei tama e Koro ē

Here I am O Tangaroa

Guardian and Keeper of the tides

The great tide, the eternal tide, the ancient tide

O Tangaroa, O Tangaroa, O Tangaroa

Hear thou me

He checked the line attached to his hook, threw it over the side of the waka and waited.

Māui Tikitiki glanced sideways at his brothers. Nobody appeared concerned. He shifted slightly and peered into the water as though the fish might somehow be hiding from him. Still nothing.

He cleared his throat and adjusted his line. Surely there was something wrong with it. He checked the hook. He checked the knot. He checked the bait. Everything seemed fine.

Meanwhile, his brothers continued hauling fish into the waka. One pulled in a fish. Then another. A moment later another fish splashed into the hull. They said nothing, though each secretly watched their youngest brother from the corner of an eye.

Māui frowned.

He shifted again.

Then again.

Then again.

His brothers exchanged knowing glances. Before long they had already caught a dozen fish between them.

Māui stared suspiciously into the water. Somewhere beneath the surface there had to be a fish foolish enough to bite his hook. The silence lingered.

His brothers smiled quietly to themselves.

They knew it would not be long before their youngest brother lost interest if he did not catch a fish soon.

They all knew he did not possess the gift of patience.

Mua glanced at his youngest brother and immediately noticed the fidgeting.

“Little brother,” he said quietly, “how does the prized jawbone of Murirangawhenua fare with the fish of the great Ocean of Kiwa?"

Māui's head snapped around.

A mischief grin spread across his face.

“We’re in the wrong place,” he declared as he leapt to his feet. “We need to go further out. The largest fish must be hiding in the deepest parts of the ocean.”

His brothers groaned in unison.

And there it is, thought Mua.

Nevertheless, they complied at his request.

Hianga picked up the hiwa, the steering paddle, and guided the waka further out to sea. The shoreline slowly receded behind them as the ocean opened up on every side. The familiar landmarks of home became smaller and smaller until they finally disappeared altogether.

A frown crept across his face as he turned and looked back over his shoulder. Nothing.

Their island was gone.

For the first time that morning, unease stirred within him. He tried to ignore it. After all, he was Māui. The trickster. The adventurer. The one who always found a way out of trouble.

Yet, the *feeling* remained.

A tension settled deep within his bones. He felt chilled. Not by the wind. Not by the spray of the sea. Something else lingered at the edge of his awareness, something he could neither see nor explain.

He stood quietly for a moment, staring across the endless expanse of water. The ocean stretched in every direction, vast and unfamiliar. He rolled his shoulders, then his neck, and drew in a slow measured breath. The way his mother had taught him.

Still, the feeling remained.

Something he could not explain.

His brothers appeared not to notice.

They continued preparing their lines and talking amongst themselves as though nothing had changed.

Māui rolled his shoulders. Then his neck. Drawing in a long measured breath, he slowly released it and steadied his thoughts. Nice and slow, the way his mother had taught him.

Still, the *feeling* lingered.

And far beneath the waka, unseen by all of them, something stirred in the depths.

* * *

The Immortal Guardian of the Winds, Tāwhirimātea, answered for him

Moko —this is the place.

His head snapped to attention at the faint but distinct voice. It spoke again.

Here —Stop!

He shivered again. A series of creases formed on his forehead, but he complied with the voice.

"I think this is the place," he announced, attempting to sound far more certain than he felt.

Clearing his throat, Māui drew himself up proudly and began chanting to Tangaroa, the Immortal Guardian of the Ocean. His brothers watched on in silence, waiting to see what their youngest sibling would do next.

As the words of the karakia left his lips, his thoughts drifted unexpectedly to his beloved grandmother, Murirangawhenua. The memory of her softened something within him. The bravado faded. The restlessness eased.

For a moment he was no longer trying to impress his brothers.

He was simply her moko. The one she had trusted with the sacred jawbone. The one she had believed in. The one she had prepared for a purpose greater than he yet understood.

Remembering her teachings, Māui lowered his gaze and continued the ritual chant, this time with genuine reverence.

Tēnā,

Ko te kauae nui

Ko te kauae roa

Ko te kauae matua o taku tipuna a Murirangawhenua

O the Great and Noble jawbone,

The Esteemed jawbone of my ancestor

Murirangawhenua

Ko au tēnei, tēnā, ki waho, ki tua

Te hiringa ka tau mai nei i te tahoranuiātea o Tangaroa ē

Ko te ueue-nuku

Ko te ueue-rangi

oi

Here I am—present—out beyond the known, in the deep waters.

The surge of energy breathes upon me

Here, in the vast open expanse of Tangaroa.

The Earth trembles

The Heavens above stir

It is done!

E Tangaroa, Tangaroa, Tangaroa whakamau tai

Anei te kauae o taku tipuna a Murirangawhenua!

E kimi ana, e hāhau ana I te mōkai nui

Nāu e te tipuna, e Tangaroa ē ī

Hei kai mō tēnei tama ngenge

O Tangaroa—Guardian of the Ocean tides

I present the jawbone of my ancestor —Murirangawhenua.

It seeks, it probes for the great Fish of the Oceans

Granted by you —O Tangaroa

A feast for this weary traveler

Māui smeared the sacred jawbone once more with his blood. Satisfied that the line was secured properly, he lowered the jawbone over the side of the waka and released a quiet sigh. Then he settled back to wait.

His brothers did the same.

At last there was peace.

The ocean rolled gently beneath them as the waka drifted upon the waters of Kiwa. For a time the brothers fished in silence, content to enjoy the calm after the excitement of the morning.

Then something caught Māui's eye.

A bird.

Tilting his head, he watched it meander across the sky in their direction.

"Mua," he called, pointing towards the horizon. "What is that bird yonder?"

Mua followed his brother's gaze and opened his mouth to answer. He never had the chance. Tāwhirimātea, the Immortal Guardian of the Winds, answered for him.

Dark-grey clouds swept across the heavens with frightening speed. The calm sea vanished as the ocean began to heave beneath them. Without warning a violent storm erupted around the small waka.

The brothers scrambled back to their positions.

Paddles dug quickly into the water as waves of panic gripped them.

Voices shouted against the roar of the wind.

The heavens churned above them as opposing winds slammed together. Waves rose and crashed against the hull, driving the brothers further and further from the familiar waters they knew.

Hours passed. The storm showed no mercy.

The brothers battled the fury of Tangaroa and Tāwhirimātea as best they could, fighting simply to keep the waka afloat.

Then, as suddenly as it had begun, the storm ceased. The ocean settled. The winds fell silent.

Exhausted beyond measure, the brothers collapsed where they sat. One by one sleep claimed them as the waka drifted aimlessly upon the dark waters.

Night descended. The storm had passed, but it had not released them.

Sometime later Māui stirred. Something was pulling at him. His eyes opened slowly. For several moments nothing made sense. He rubbed the sleep from his eyes and stared upwards at the heavens.

Then he saw it. Māhutonga. His heart skipped. "That's Māhutonga," he whispered.

Confusion crept across his face. "Why is it so high in the sky?"

He stared at the stars for a long time, trying to make sense of what he was seeing. Nothing felt right. At last he lay back down, disoriented and uneasy.

Before long, a restless sleep claimed him once more.

* * *